

Examiners' Report

June 2022

GCE English Language 9EN0 02

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Introduction

This paper focussed on written language with four texts produced at school by a single child. The question was similar to previous years and asked candidates to analyse and comment on how the development of literacy enabled the child to communicate for a range of purposes. The expectation was that candidates would combine observations on the language features of the children's literacy development with a context-based analysis approach that would consider how the language reflected purpose, audience etc as well as the environment in which it was produced. As in previous years with written data, there were multiple texts (necessary because of the short nature of most written pieces) and there was no expectation that each text would be covered equally. Regarding the approach, some candidates analysed and selected examples from each text in turn. Others chose to focus on a particular feature and used a few pieces of data to illustrate this before moving onto another feature and text selection. Either approach was equally valid.

Typically, lower level answers illustrated a lack of confidence with the application of language features and where these were applied, there was often evidence of a descriptive approach. Additionally, candidates in the lowest levels often identified only a very narrow range of issues with little or no focus on the types of text being produced by Emily. Often, the primary focus was on graphological features such as the use of pictures and the formation of letters and spelling with any comments on syntax often restricted to tense and sentence type. Although examples tended to be accurate, candidates at lower levels did not explain the significance of these and so it amounted to feature spotting. Candidates who were placed in higher levels were able to apply a wider range of language features to their analysis and terminology was wider ranging with fewer errors. Candidates at higher levels also moved away from the A-level popular Kroll to more current theories/concepts and issues (such as educational goals/DfE/KS). The purpose/genre/context of the texts was generally kept in mind throughout by exploring the function of the texts (narrative, recount etc) and how the audience would respond coupled with insightful comments on literacy development. At higher levels, fluent written expression enabled candidates to tie together multiple points and increase the depth and breadth of their response.

Overall, it was clear that centres had worked hard preparing candidates for Component 2 and had used the advanced information productively to ensure that the students had learned the appropriate areas of children's written language development. Many candidates showed clear linguistic knowledge and there were very few who did not identify at least some issues in the data provided.

Question 1

The focus of the question this year was similar to previous written papers in that candidates were expected to explain how the child's literacy development allowed them to communicate across a range of specific purposes and to explore the ways in which they were successful or showed evidence of still needing to acquire certain skills.

Many at lower levels wrote only on the features of literacy that Emily demonstrated and often did not acknowledge the type of texts at all. Responses which just identified a list of features/skills that the child had or had yet to develop were unlikely to achieve higher levels, especially for AO3 which requires candidates to link language and context. Similarly, candidates at lower levels often bolted on theories without clear and explicit links to the data. Although showing recall, such approaches did not show the application needed for AO2. Candidates who did focus on the question by linking context development and theories/concepts/issues were able to access the higher levels. Among these candidates, there was an increasing sense of understanding about the different genres and forms the child had produced with a clear focus on how Emily showed her literacy skills to produce recounts, narratives and argumentative pieces. Some of the highest scoring candidates effectively identified the impact of the different purposes and the external influences of education.

As in previous sittings, responses in the lower levels tended to be aware of some common issues/theories underpinning literacy, and Kroll seemed to be a key focus for many. Kroll's stages were often explained in some detail but at lower levels there was little or no evidence of this recall being applied to the data. This lack of application meant that such candidates could not reach out of lower Level 2. As in previous written language papers, candidates often confused speech and writing development and did not seem to be aware that the child's spoken language would be reasonably advanced and 'praised' the use of tense or nouns or implied that written language was in some way innate. Candidates performing at the mid-levels upward were more careful in their selections and often adapted theories from other parts of the course (such as narrative structure theories – Labov was popular) or referenced a wider range of theorists who helped them address context as well as development such as Rothery, Britton and Haliday. An increasing number considered the educational goals that Emily would be expected to achieve in school by referencing the Key Stage literacy targets, DfE guidelines and the teacher's feedback to explain the educational focus of the activities. At higher levels, there was evidence of challenging theories, issues and concepts, with some candidates noticing that Emily was often exceeding the development expected by Kroll. Candidates should be reminded that it can be beneficial to briefly define/explain a theory/concept on first reference to make understanding clear. For instance, some candidates referenced issues like the 'creative approach' or 'rules based approach' without explaining what they meant by these references.

As in previous sittings, although all candidates understood the importance of discussing orthography, there was a great deal of variation in the depth and quality of the discussion of spelling and links to phonology. It was noticeable that despite the inclusion of an IPA reference sheet, the use of the IPA was still not widespread as expected and a significant number of candidates relied upon phonetic spelling or included only one example. Although such candidates typically included a description of the spelling, the infrequent use of the IPA to create links between sound and spelling prevented candidates from showing the accuracy and understanding associated with better responses and made comments that felt descriptive rather than analytical as they did not show subject specific skills. For instance, many candidates discussed the child's spelling of 'abee lams', but referenced the use of the 'ee' sound instead of using the relevant IPA symbol or noted the had been omitted because it was silent. Others just stated that the had been removed from 'lived' because it is not pronounced, but did not explain what and how the processes followed by the child resulted in this. Additionally, candidates placed in Level 2 and below did not draw any connections between the spelling forms used by the child. At higher levels, pattern spotting was more common and enabled a more in depth analysis of the data (such as those who discussed the representation of the /i:/ phoneme in 'abee' and 'Timmy' or noted that 'silent' letters appeared latter in the data set, e.g the in wrap). Additionally, few at lower levels related the children's spelling strategies to how spelling is taught in school and were content to just label spellings as 'phonetic' and sometimes to place the child within a stage of development (using Gentry/Kroll) with no consideration of why children approach spelling in this way. At higher levels, there was more awareness of the different strategies a child may draw upon such as learned spelling or blending. Few candidates acknowledged where and why the children could spell successfully (instead just focussing on what the child could not do) and whether the spellings caused any significant barrier to the child's ability to communicate effectively. It was only candidates at higher levels who considered other influences on spelling such as casual speech and regional accent.

Comments on syntax and morphology at lower levels were either absent, limited to observations on development (such as 'praising' their use of tense) or were very narrow in range. There was often little attempt to discuss how the children's use of syntax and morphology in their written pieces allowed them to achieve their purposes. When comments on significant language features were made, some candidates at lower levels lacked the ability to relate productively to the data. For instance, candidates at lower levels would merely note the use of compound sentences whereas candidates placed in level 3 and above were often noting the function of conjunction and how it linked to purpose (e.g. 'but' to create a contrast in her argumentative writing). Candidates performing in the mid-levels and above were able to offer a greater range of features and had more confidence with terminology. As such, they were able to identify, but more importantly explain, the use of features such as adjectives, adverbials for sequencing, variation in sentence type, Emily's ability to adopt different perspectives through her use of pronouns etc. At these mid to high levels, these comments and observations were linked to the audience needs and the conventions of the genre. In some instances, candidates grouped together various features of syntax that contributed to the same contextual factor, for instance the various grammatical features that allowed the child to offer chronology/time. This was particularly productive.

This extract is taken from a response that scored bottom Level 5 for both AO sets and shows how multiple AOs can be integrated into efficient sections.

This extract originally followed a section in which the candidate discussed sentence type in Text A.

taught early in a child's education. Emily shows more confidence in sentence complexity in Text B, where she uses the compound sentence <She found treasure and she took it back to the ship.> This is a longer sentence that she has used as a standard structure for and included anaphoric referencing by using the pronoun <she> instead of repeating <Lola.> This shows an awareness of the narrative writing ~~mode~~ ~~text~~ category (Rothery) as the anaphoric referencing allows her to make her narrative flow more seamlessly, achieving her imaginative function. This compound sentence is significant due to Emily's spelling. It contains less non-standard spelling than Text A and the noun <treasure> is spelt correctly, which is interesting because it could be considered to be a 'tricky word' as the <a> grapheme is silent / doesn't correspond to a phoneme.

in this lexeme. Therefore, it is most likely that Emily has utilised what Vygotsky would call 'environmental print', where she has been able to spell the lexeme correctly because of her exposure to other narratives with the field of pirates that include the hypernym <treasure>. In the text D, Emily clearly reflects her established fluency stage by using a standard compound-complex sentence <In the past girls only got to cook, but now girls and boys can cook.> This allows her to communicate through written language as she can construct sentences confidently that position clauses to contrast with one another. This allows her to show cause and effect and be evaluative, linking to Piaget's Cognitivism theory as she understands how concepts have changed over time. To apply Tomasello's Usage-Based theory, Emily utilises her understanding of history and change to craft a compound-complex sentence that allows her to achieve her representational function by contrasting the past and present to show change over time.



The candidate uses accurate terminology to identify their example (AO1) and shows a discriminating and analytical focus by discussing Emily's use of pronoun referencing to avoid repeating the noun. This comment could have been improved slightly if the candidate had noted that such a strategy is part of the SE formation.

A secure context focus is demonstrated as they proceed to explain how this feature links to narrative writing (AO3) and there is a brief mention of Rothery, but this could have been further developed by referencing an educational issue such as DfE educational targets.

The candidate then identifies a spelling issue and so is starting to show confidence with exploring language features at different levels. The use of the phrase 'tricky word' for discussing 'treasure' implies knowledge of how children are taught to spell (AO2) and the strategies they adopt and the candidate demonstrates understanding by briefly explaining the term. The reference to environmental print is plausible (other candidates suggested more developed reasons for this 'environmental print' such as pirates having been a recent topic in class / key words and phrases having been modelled on the board or displays).

The candidate then returns to sentence type and uses Text D with another accurate and relevant example. There is clear link made between the language feature and the context (comments on clauses that contrast, cause and effect etc). Throughout this extract (and the whole response), the candidate uses an appropriate register and style and sophisticated expression (AO1).



Avoid just identifying a language feature/example or noting that that a specific feature is used. Use your linguistic knowledge to speculate about why it is present. For instance, you should consider whether it relates to context or development and why it is important in relation to the data and the question you are answering and whether the feature supports or doesn't support concepts issues and theories you have explored.

This extract is taken from a response at the bottom of Level 5 for AO1/2 and 3. It illustrates a productive and highly efficient approach to spelling showing fluent expression, terminology and links to both key concepts and issues and context.

One way in which Emily is better able to communicate using written language is through her orthographi-
cal development, ^{development} This can be seen, for example, ^{across} ~~the~~
texts A and B, where Emily ~~is~~ ~~the~~ produces a non-
standard spelling of the past tense verb 'saw'

as well as ~~the~~ "called" ~~is~~ as 'corid' and 'sorf',
~~subst~~ evidencing phonetic transcription of the
/ɔ:/ vowel sound with the digraph 'or'. This
non-standard orthographical pattern is extended
across her earlier texts through the rendering of
the past tense inflection -ed in 'lived' as simply
'lived', omitting the silent 'e' grapheme. Hence,
her early orthographical tendencies conform to
Gentry's phonetic spelling stage, where Emily's
written language is vastly similar to her spoken
language as a lack of learned spelling rules
means that ~~it~~ is unsurprising for young children
of her age to employ the spoken phonetic
articulation ~~in~~ to aid with producing unfamiliar
written lexis. Despite using a non-conventional
orthographical system, it would be unrealistic to
suggest that Emily is not able to communicate
effectively in the written mode as her spellings
are phonetically decipherable and she effectively
fulfils the demands of the task by offering an
accurate and legible recount of her Easter holiday.



The candidate begins with acknowledging the question and this is likely to help them keep focus on relevant discussion.

Two discriminating examples are used to illustrate the phoneme under discussion. The use of multiple examples illustrating the same feature or a pattern of use can make a point more persuasive and achieve greater analytical depth (AO1).

References to issues such as 'learned spelling', Gentry and the links between spoken and written language imply a knowledge of the different ways a child may learn to spell (AO2) and relevant terminology such as 'diagraph' is used accurately (AO1).

The final section shows a focus on context / audience (AO3) with the comment 'phonetically decipherable' and avoids any hint of a deficit approach by describing the forms as 'non-conventional' (AO2). As well as clear application of knowledge of concepts and issues (AO2) and ability to link language features to context (AO3), the candidate uses sophisticated expression throughout this extract (and the rest of the response) which makes their points highly accessible (AO1).



Whether you are examining a single piece of data or several, looking carefully for patterns of use of a particular feature and use of additional supporting examples can allow you to make more discriminating comments on a child's stage of development and/or the influence of context.

This extract is taken from a response that achieved low Level 5 for AO1/2 and AO3. In it, the candidate discusses Texts A and C and shows a close focus on context.

communication skills. Text Both texts seem to align most closely with Halliday's representative function, or relaying information, and so ~~enough~~ it is prudent to analyse both texts by how well they communicate Emily's individual experience. In Text A, ~~despite some similar and many examples of~~

Emily is engaging with her Easter holidays. She ~~is~~ has developed ~~a~~ an awareness of the need ~~for~~ for the post tree, and is using adverbial phrases to ~~proof~~ demonstrate her knowledge of the audience's need for context and exposition - e.g. 'with my mum and dad + Timmy'. The possessive determiner 'my' also demonstrates Emily's acknowledgement of the need to relate back to her personal experience within the function of report. ~~Then,~~ ^{However,} as explained in Kothery's category, Emily lacks chronology to make this a report, which perhaps suggests that there is some level of clarity of communication not reached. However, on the whole, Emily's organisation is good. She uses ~~used~~ nouns from the lexical field of Easter such as 'chicks' + 'lambs' to remain focused on the brief, and consolidates this through her drawing, supporting Piaget's cognitive theory - that children need to understand what they write before they can write it. And as far as Emily's orthographical clarity, though her spelling is clearly in the phonetic stage, she is choosing logical spellings that adhere to the ~~audience~~ reader's own logic. For example, the irregular verb 'saw' is spelt 'sor'. Emily has used the phonetic approach correctly - it just simply cannot account for various diagraphs which

produce the same sound of /o:/. Thus we can see that Emily's literacy is allowing her to communicate + relay information - but ~~the~~ the phonetic approach fails her in some ~~aspects~~ ~~aspects~~ phonemes which can be produced in multiple different ways.

Text C is written later ^(5 + 9 months) and clearly shows how Emily's ability to conform to an appropriate genre has developed. We can easily put this text into the recount category due to the successful use of adverbials of time such as 'in the morning' and 'then', and this shows Emily's awareness of purpose has developed enough that she ~~also~~ understands a need for chronology when recalling a past experience.



The opening of this extract shows a clear context focus which continues throughout the analysis (AO3). In this instance, the adaptation of Halliday is plausible and used to link to the context of Emily's individual experience. Language features are introduced to support this (AO3) and although there is a minor error with the term 'adverbial phrase', there is a close focus on how Emily is meeting the demands of the exposition task (AO3).

Reference to the possessive determiner shows ability to apply relevant terms and the expression is accurate with elements of sophistication for exam conditions (AO1). The candidate shows confident and discriminating knowledge of theory with the reference to Rothery and the concept of chronology. The candidate's expression and awareness of the need for a tentative approach (indicated by 'perhaps suggests') shows some discriminating understanding.

Further evidence of the sustained focus across all AOs is illustrated in the rest of the extract. Some aspects of lexis are dealt with suitably briefly and linked to the broad context of the piece.

The spelling section, though brief, shows further discriminating understanding. Context comments around accessibility, the 'reader's own logic' (AO3) are supported by a clear example and accurate use of the IPA. Although some of the references could have been explained further, there is some exploration of issues with the phonics approach (AO2).

The opening section on Text C demonstrates how the candidate sustains this encompassing approach with clear reference to specific language features (adverbials) clearly linked to context (AO3).



For written data, you should consider the language features that the child has used that link to function and audience as well as development. This could include how they have adapted their syntax for the purpose or whether their spelling and graphology affects their ability to convey meaning in the written language. You should also consider whether the environment in which the child is writing has had an effect on their language use.

is also impressive as a child may typically use either the <C> or <K> grapheme as the both produce the velar plosive /k/. Furthermore, Emily also uses phonetic spelling in the ^{adjective} ~~AAA~~ "babee" when describing the lambs. As expected, Emily experiments with the /i:/ sound by using the <ee> digraph. This is common in childrens' language as the /i:/ sound has ~~a~~ multiple variants such as /ɪ/, /i:/ and /ai/, so it is common for a child to experiment with orthography when attempting to produce these sounds. ~~Such use of phonetic orthography is expected and reflected by Kroll,~~ ~~as~~. Although Emily is in what Kroll coined as the preparatory stage of development, Emily's experimentation and achievements with orthography make her appear in the consolidation stage. However, Kroll does acknowledge that his theory is linear and a child's development of language is often circular, therefore these stages cannot ~~be~~ always be accurately applied.



The candidate starts their orthography section by making a reference to the question and provides a clear and relevant example. A few observations are made in passing around tense but, although accurate, the candidate does not do much with them in terms of either literacy development or context. There is an implied comment here with the use of 'however' that this is a standardised aspect of Emily's language which will contrast with her spelling. The reference to phonetic orthography shows understanding of the issue and further references to Key Stage 1 and 'sounding out' shows that this candidate is aware of issues that underpin a child's experience of spelling in education (AO2). These could have been developed further to maintain a discriminating focus – what does Key Stage 1 state about spelling? Why does she sound out? How does this relate to a child's experience of learning to spell if using phonics?

The IPA is applied with accuracy and makes the exploration of the feature more persuasive and clear (AO3). AOs could have been improved here by looking for patterns of use across the data (i.e. other representation of this phoneme). There is an error at the end of this section as the candidate references the /r/ phoneme which is not likely present in 'saw'.

As the response progresses to discuss the next phoneme, the candidate's expression implies a reference to Emily's spoken language ('she has mastered the phoneme...') but does recover a few lines later to discuss her use of the digraph. No evidence is offered for why this is 'impressive' (e.g. by exploring links to order graphemes are taught in phonics). Another error or loss of focus appears when discussing 'abee'. Initially the candidate offers a valid explanation (experimenting with representing the /i/ sound) but then moves into variant sounds instead of considering the graphemes/digraphs that can represent the sound /i/.

The final section shows some discriminating understanding of Kroll. Unlike candidates at lower levels, this one identifies how the child does not fit with expectations.



Showing understanding of core theories or more general issues associated with literacy education can help you explain why children exhibit certain characteristics in their writing.

Remember to briefly explain the relevancy of any language issues and concepts that you introduce in the course of your analysis. To show a more discriminating and critical application of theories and concepts, you should attempt to both support and identify issues with the theories that you have studied.

This very brief extract has been included to show a short, but efficient, explanation of a spelling feature from a candidate who achieved low Level 4 for AO1/2 and mid Level 4 for AO3.

It also illustrates where some short additional explanations would have allowed access to higher levels.

Emily ~~uses~~ experiments with orthography in order to communicate through her written language. In Text A, a recount of her holiday, she writes, "I sor chikcs and babee lams". In this sentence, Emily writes the verb 'sor' phonetically, as well as the adjective 'babee' and noun 'lams' (with the omission of the grapheme - silent letters are not taught until later in Key Stage 1 so this may be why she has not mastered this yet). Phonetics are taught in Key Stage 1, which reflects Emily's age as she is 6 years old. Therefore, Emily is taking a phonics approach to her orthography in order to communicate via her written language. This is impressive as she



Context is introduced as an aside at this point (it is developed significantly later in the response) with the reference to recount and the candidate introduces an example that allows them to identify three relevant illustrations of phonetic spelling using some terminology to distinguish word class. Using multiple examples in this way makes the response more discriminating as it implies that this is a frequent feature at this stage of development. The candidate offers an clear explanation for this spelling strategy by considering the teaching Emily has received, where silent letters fit into the chronology of teaching and which strategy she has likely been using.

Although this response has moved some way from simply noting the phonetic spelling, the candidate could have expanded the explanation of KS1, used the IPA to prove the silent letters and or explored phoneme/grapheme counts to show the process Emily has followed.

This brief extract from a low Level 4 response has been chosen because it shows some effective treatment of context with some aspects that could be developed further to achieve high Level 4 or move into Level 5.

Furthermore, Emily shows her genre convention awareness via her written language. In Text C, Emily writes a recount of her school trip. Here, she writes the declarative, "In the morning we went to the workshop." By writing the ~~noun temporal device~~ ~~tem~~ noun "morning", this indicates time and chronology of events, which is a key feature of the recount genre. The irregular verb "went" shows that she understands the concept of time - This reflects Piaget's Cognitive Theory, which states that children must understand ^{and experience} a word before they use it - Therefore, children use past tense when they understand time, and Emily has done this successfully. This is important in a recount genre, as a recount must be in past tense. Furthermore Later in the text, Emily writes the simple sentence, "Then we had our lunch". ^{The} ~~the~~ cohesive marker ^{"Then"} indicates time passing and ~~shows~~

Shows that Emily is writing in chronological order, which is impressive for her age (she is 5 years and 9 months, suggesting she is transitioning from Early Years to Key Stage 1, in which ~~recounts are often~~ recount writing is often an activity). ~~Another~~ Emily further shows her genre awareness in Text B, where she writes a narrative. ~~For~~ In the simple sentence, "She was corld Lola", the proper noun "Lola" ~~gives~~ shows her imagination in writing as she has created a character. ~~This~~ for her story. This reflects Labov's narrative writing theory, ~~these~~ ~~speci~~ particularly the orientation element, where the characters and settings are introduced. Further on, ~~the~~ Emily writes, "She fowd tressure and she took it back to the ship". This sentence reflects the 'action' element of narrative writing, and also reflects Halliday's imaginative function as she has effectively written ~~about~~ the main events in her story. When



The candidate clearly signposts the focus of the section with the reference to genre. Widely used terminology such as declarative is applied (but the reason for this reference is not explained). The focus on indicating time/chronology is identified as key feature of recount genre showing a close focus on the literacy skills needed to produce a recount. The response could be improved here with a more precise reference than 'noun'. The discussion of 'went' and Emily understanding the concept of time with reference to Piaget is broadly accurate but she would have more than likely already had this in her spoken language and so has transferred her skills from one mode to another. The context focus is developed further with the candidate reinforcing the link between tense and the genre before presenting another example with a slightly different focus. Again, despite the persuasiveness and accuracy of linking chronology to context, the candidate could have used a more precise and accurate term to describe 'then' and offered some brief details about expectations at KS1.

There is more focus on genre in the discussion of the narrative and there is a clear and precise link to a named aspect of Labov's narrative structure (the orientation) showing how context and theories concepts and issues can support each other. The candidate could have taken this further by referencing how Emily may have developed this skill (AO2).

A further brief, but confident, reference to narrative writing is made with the reference to 'action element' but the reference to Halliday is not effectively supported.



For written data, you should consider the language features that the child has used that link to function and audience as well as development. This could include how they have adapted their syntax for the purpose or whether their spelling and graphology affects their ability to convey meaning in the written language. You should also consider whether the environment in which the child is writing has had an effect on their language use.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure you read the question carefully and follow its demands.
- Context is always referenced in the AO3 grid and should always be discussed. Linking language features to context is essential to achieve Level 3 and above.
- Always relate language features to a language development issue and/or contextual factors to avoid feature spotting.
- Discuss a range of language features, including syntax. Areas such as graphology should be acknowledged but avoid letting them dominate your response.
- Avoid recall/knowledge dumps by introducing issues, concepts or theories associated with literacy development only when they are relevant to the discussion of a specific example within the data
- If you are going to reference a theory associated with child development, you should briefly explain it (to demonstrate your understanding) and its relevance to the data.
- If relevant, use the data to refute any of the theories you have studied to show a discriminating / critical approach.
- Develop your knowledge of relevant phonological terminology and the IPA to avoid errors in your analysis.
- Take care with your written expression, including use of capital letters, and avoid colloquialisms in your writing.
- Although you will likely refer to issues such as the child's age and where the texts were produced in the course of your analysis, there is no need to reproduce the contextual information given in the source booklet at the start of your response.
- If you have time, check your work for errors in terminology.

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